

## CONSUMER PREFERENCE FOR BRANDED SPICE POWDERS IN ERODE CITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Branded food sector is a sector in Indian economy that establishes a strong bond between agriculture and industrial sectors. Consolidation of this connection is of vital reputation to improve the value of agricultural produce and products that in turn ensure good remunerative prices to farmers and at the same time generate constructive demand for Indian Agricultural products in the world market. Among them one industry is spice industry. Nowadays more of the consumers who buy spices have been shifting from traditional methods to modern methods in terms of preparation and consumption because of a change in trend, lack of time and certain other factors. The study was conducted in the Erode city of Tamilnadu with 120 sample respondents through web based interview method. The reason why they have shifted to branded spice powders from homemade spice powders was analysed in order to help the existing and upcoming firms to understand the consumer preference and satisfaction.*

**KEYWORDS:** Consumer Preference, Branded Spice Powders & Homemade Spice Powders

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### INTRODUCTION

Spices come from the word species, which was practical to groups of exotic food stuffs in the intermediate ages. Now a days the term Spices applies to such accepted natural plant or vegetable foodstuffs or assortments that can be used as a whole or grounded form, mainly for imparting flavor aroma and pungency to food. Spice is the product which augments or amends the quality of a thing, for example altering the taste of a food to give it zest or pungency, a sharp or permanent flavoring, or a relish.

On the basis of zone, yield, demand and availability, spices are divided into three categories; these are major, minor and exotic. Major spices are regularly used in daily life food at large amount such as Chili, onion, garlic, turmeric and ginger. Minor spices are used in small scale as a special items of food. These include coriander, fenugreek, black cumin, black pepper, dills, Joan etc.

On the other hand, exotic spices are cumin, cardamom, cinnamon; clove, nutmeg, pistachio etc. are imported from outside the country which is of high value. The auspicious climatic condition, advance technology of production and cheap availability of Indian labor is the only reason leads the country to a world level of spice production. The major shareholder of Indian spices has been transported to the eastern Asian countries. A trade of spices is exported to the overseas countries like America, England, Australia, Canada, Russia and some other

European countries. Consumers always prefers the feasible economic goods and services and contemplate about the purchase of spices from a hygienic environment which favor goods and services.

Tamil Nadu accounts for 7th place state in area and 5th place in production of spices. In Tamil Nadu a variety of spices like Chillies, Turmeric, Tamarind, Coriander, Cardamom, Pepper, Curry leaves and other minor spices like Garlic, Ginger, Cloves, and Mint are grown. Out of the Total Horticulture Area (922005 Ha), Spices occupies 15.12% (139358 Ha) of the area and 5.62% (804331 MT) of production in the state. Spices are grown in a variety of climatic condition in this state. Hence India has been considered a major spices products manufacturer and exporter in worldwide. Most of the kitchens are not completed without the addition of spices.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted erode city of Tamilnadu during the year 2018-2019. 120 respondents were selected in random through web based sources for the study. The data were collected through web based questionnaires and sent personally through emails, Whatsapp, friends and relatives in and around the city. The reason for shifting from homemade to branded spice powders was analysed using certain attributes. These attributes are ranked and calculated by using percentage method. Data on their age, income, family size, educational level, shifting reasons etc were collected.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Reasons that Made the Consumers to Shift from Homemade to Branded Spice Products

This objective was aimed to sampled consumers towards homemade and processed spices products.

**Table 1: Food Habits of the Consumers**

(N=120)

S. No	Particulars	Percentage
1	Vegetarian	2.5
2	Non vegetarian	92.5
3	Vegetarian but consumes egg	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

From the above table it is evident that the majority of the respondents are non-vegetarians (92.5%). It is then shadowed by people who consumes egg alone being a vegetarian (5%). Only 2.5% of the sample respondents are vegetarians.

**Table 2: Respondent's Preference towards Branded, Homemade and Local Made Spice Products**

(N=120)

S. No	Attributes	Number	Percentage
1	Branded Spice powder	74	61.66
2	Homemade spice powder	5	4.1666
3	Homemade along with Branded	40	33.33
4	Local made spice powder	1	0.833

It can be observed from the table regarding respondents' preference for branded, homemade, and local made spices products. It was found that out of 120 respondents, 61.66%, of them were using branded spice powders, 4.16 % consumer were using homemade spice powders, 33.33% consumer were using homemade along with spice powders, whereas only 0.83 % consumer were using local made spice powders.

Table 3: Socio Economic Profile of the Respondents

(N=120)

S.No	Category	No. of Samples using Branded	Percentage	No. of Samples using Homemade	Percentage	No. of Samples using Homemade along with Branded	Percentage	No. of Samples using Local made	Percentage
<b>1.</b>	<b>Age in years</b>								
	18-25	18	15	4	3.333	19	15.83	1	0.833
	25-40	41	34.16	1	0.833	8	6.666	-	
	40-55	14	11.66			13	10.83		
	Above 55	1	0.833						
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61.66</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.166</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.833</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Education</b>								
	Illiterate					2	1.666		
	Primary up to 8th	1	0.833			1	0.833		
	High up to 10th	4	3.333			4	3.333		
	SSC up to 12th	11	9.166			3	2.5		
	Graduation	48	40	1	0.833	21	17.5		
	Post-graduation	10	8.333	4	3.333	9	7.5	1	0.833
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61.66</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.166</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.833</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Family size</b>								
	Small family	13	10.83	0	0	4	3.333	0	0
	Medium family	61	50.83	4	3.333	33	27.5	0	0
	Large family	0	0	1	0.833	3	2.5	1	0.833
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61.66</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.166</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.833</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Annual income</b>								
	Less than 2.5 lakhs	18	15	2	1.666	13	10.83	1	0.8333
	2.5 – 5 lakhs	53	44.16	1	0.833	24	20	0	0
	Above 5 lakh	3	2.5	2	1.666	3	2.5	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61.66</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.166</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8333</b>

Most of the consumer belongs to the age of 25-40 years (41.66 percentage). It was followed by age groups 18-25 years which accounts for 35 percent. About 22.5 percentage of consumers belonged to the age group of 40-55 years (22.5 percentage). There were very less number of consumer who were belonging to the age group of 55 and above (0.833 percentage). Among these consumers 34.16 percent of consumers who comes under the age group of 25-40 years (41 percent) uses branded spice powders followed by 18-25 years and 40-55 years respectively.

Most of the consumers who buy branded spice powders are graduates (40%) followed by consumers who had completed high SSC (9.166%). Consumers who had their primary education and those who are illiterates have not purchased any branded spice powders (0.833%).

Only medium sized family members (50.83%) consumed more branded spices followed by small family members (10.83%)

People with income levels around 2.5-5 lakhs consumed more branded spice powders (44.16%) followed by people who are getting income less than 2.5 lakhs (15%). People who are getting more than 5 lakhs income purchased less branded spice powders (2.5%).

In case of homemade spice powders most of the consumer belongs to the age of 18-25 years (3.33 percentage) have only consumed them. It was followed by age groups 25-40 years which accounts for only 0.833 percent. Consumers above the age of 40 does not prefer any homemade spice powders.

Among the literacy levels post graduates alone contributed a percentage of 3.33 followed by graduates on purchasing of homemade spice powders. People who are not graduates and illiterates has not opted for homemade spice powders

Family members of the medium size segment (3.33%) accounted for maximum share on purchase of homemade spice powders followed by large family members (0.833%). No small family members had chosen homemade spice powders.

In case of income levels most of the consumers who fall under the income levels of below 2.5 lakh and above 5 lakh (1.66% for each) had purchased homemade spice powders and only few in the 2.5-5 lakh (0.833%) segment had purchased homemade spice powders.

In case of people using homemade along with branded spice powders most of the consumer belongs to the age of 18-25 years (15.83 percentage) followed by age groups 40-55 years which accounts for only 10.833 percent. Consumers above the age of 55 does not prefer homemade along with branded spice powders.

Family members of the medium size segment (27.5%) accounted for maximum share on purchase of homemade along with branded spice powders followed by small family members (3.33%) and large family members (2.5%) respectively.

In spite of the literacy levels graduates alone contributed a percentage of 17.5 followed by post graduates on purchasing of homemade along with branded spice powders. People who are not graduates and illiterates has meagerly opted for homemade spice powders.

People with annual income of about 2.5-5 lakhs (20%) contributed maximum on purchasing of homemade along with branded spice powders. This is followed by people who are below 2.5 lakhs category (10.83%). Peoples whose income levels are above 5 lakh has contributed only 2.5%.

Peoples who use local made spice powders are very less (0.833%) and mostly they fall under the age group of large family members ageing 18-25 years with a income level less than 2.5 lakhs.

**Table 4: Respondents who are willing to Shift from Homemade to Branded Spice Powders**  
(N=120)

S. NO	Disposition	Number	Percentage
1	Yes	105	87.5
2	No	15	12.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above table it is inferred that out of 120 respondents, 105(87.5%) are willing to shift from homemade to branded spice powders and the rest 15 members (12.5%) does not prefer shifting from home made to branded spice powders. These people may shift to branded spice powders in the future so they are also considered for the following table

**Table 5: Factors that Influences the Respondents who are Shifting from Homemade to Branded Spices**

(N=120)

S. No	Particulars	Percentage based on Ranks
1	Laborious to prepare at home	<b>37.5</b>
2	Time consuming	<b>24.16</b>
3	Attractive and Convenient packing	<b>24.16</b>
4	Availability	<b>20</b>
5	Lack of knowledge	<b>19.16</b>
6	Self interest	19.16
7	Quality	15.83
8	Trend	15
9	Cost effective	14.16

The factors that influences the respondents who are shifting from homemade to branded spices are analyzed using Garret ranking method and represented in percentages. Factors that scored maximum in each rank are arranged from ranks 1 to 9. So the total percentages need not to be hundred. Among the respondents, 37.5% considered the process is so laborious to prepare at home. Almost 24.16% members indicated that it was time consuming and Attractive and Convenient packing was found among branded powders. 20% opted for lack of availability. There was a lack of knowledge on preparation and self-interest on branded spice powders among 19.16 % of customers. Almost 15% of consumers opted for quality and trend. Only few respondents (14.16%) opted for cost effective criteria. Most of the respondents find it is a laborious process and time consuming, which made them to shift. In spite of cost and quality, most respondents preferred to stay with homemade spice powders.

## SUMMARY

Among the 120 respondents, 61.66% are using only branded spice powders whereas 33.3% are using homemade powders along with branded spice powders and few (4.16%) have contributed for locally made powders. The main reason is that the learning level is extraordinary and most people are employed. On behalf of their busy work schedules they have no time to prepare homemade spice powders.

Youngsters are more interested in trying out new products and most of the branded spice powders are preferred by age group of 25-40 as age increases their concentration on human work gradually decreases

Most of the graduates preferred branded spice powders (40%) because of lack of time and at the same time more income have been generated because of their job nature. Furthermost the illiterates preferred homemade along with branded because they may lack knowledge on preparation. Post graduates because of health concern opted for homemade spices even though it is time consuming and laborious work. Lack of time, laborious nature and lack of knowledge on how to prepare had made the consumers to go with branded spice powders. Small families don't need more food consumption and they had more time to prepare powders. But because of the change in trend most of them chose branded spice powders (13%) and branded spice powders along with homemade spice powders (3.33%). Medium sized family members need to satisfy more members so they go up with branded spice powders (50.83%) and branded spice powders along with homemade spice powders (27.5%). Large families solely dependent on branded along with homemade powders (0.833%). Most of these branded food items saves dynamism and time.

Most of the people coming under all income groups (almost 50%) opted for branded spice powders and it is clear that income doesn't have influence on purchase of branded items. Few preferred branded along with homemade powders.

Among 120 respondents, 105 respondents are willing to shift from homemade to branded spice powders. The reasons are these homemade spice powders are laborious to prepare at home, consumed more time for preparation. Branded items are packed at convenient sizes and are readily available whereas the homemade ones are tiresome to measure. Lack of knowledge on how to prepare is also another reason for preferring branded spice powders. People who are not willing shift may shift to brands in the future because of the changing trends and also the mindset of people.

## CONCLUSIONS

Companies can design their strategies in such a way to attract more customers by providing attractive offers, discounts etc., because most of them have shifted from homemade powders to branded powders. In order to retain their customers, the top players must adopt some strategies to overcome its competitors so that they can withstand for a longer period of time. Some of the strategies like new innovative products, more flavours can be introduced. Quality and aroma are the most concentrated areas among the customers and companies should come up with suitable solutions. Packaging and availability are other factors. More outlets for their products can be approached and encouraged. All the companies should concentrate more on advertisements and promotional measures. Particularly local brands should contribute more on promotional measures in order to create awareness and compete with national brands. More packages sizes and more flavours can be introduced. New entrants in the market should concentrate on making the product easily available for the consumers as it is one of the important factor in buying decisions

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